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SHORT COMMUNICATION

An observation of the prey species of the solitary wasp, *Ectemnius cavifrons* (Hymenoptera: Sphecidae)—In August 2002 a colony of *Ectemnius cavifrons* (Thomson) was found to be established in timbers infested with *Exidia glandulosa* (St. Amans) Fries, Witches' Butter Fungus, on the roof of a central Edinburgh building (O.S. Grid NT2573; v.c. 83). When the wasps were manocuvring their prey into the entrance of their prepared tunnel they occasionally dropped it. They seemed unable to retrieve the dropped prey, possibly due to its absence of movement. Some individual wasps were more prone to dropping their prey than others. As a result a substantial sample of prey items of *E. cavifrons* was able to be collected and identified without interfering with the colony. Of the 58 prey items retrieved from below the tunnel entrances, approximately 83% consisted of hoverflies (Syrphidae) (namely 13 *Episyrphus balteatus* (De Geer), 12 *Syrphus ribesii* (L.), 6 *S. vitripennis* Meigen, 6 *S. torvus* Osten Sacken, 5 *Eupeodes corollae* (Fabricius), 4 *E. latifasciatus* (Macquart) and 2 *E. luniger* (Meigen)), 16% consisted of calliphorid flies (namely 5 *Pollenia rudis* (Fabricius) 4 *Calliphora vicina* Robineau-Desvoidy) and a single cicadellid homopteran, *Iassus latio* (L.). I am grateful to David Robertson for identifying the calliphorid flies.—K. P. BLAND, National Museums of Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1JF